

**REMARKS**

FIG. 3 of the drawings is amended, per the attached Submission, to diagrammatically show the area group being "arranged downstream from the transmission" (see paragraph 28, for example). A new Replacement Sheet of the formal drawing, accompanies this Submission, incorporates all of the requested drawing amendments. If any further amendment to the drawing is believed necessary, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as being anticipated by Reynoldson `322. The Applicant acknowledges and respectfully traverses the raised anticipatory rejection in view of the following remarks.

Reynoldson `322 relates to a multi-speed layshaft gearbox having an input shaft 2, an output shaft 1 and a layshaft 3 with a four different gear configurations provided between the shafts as well as a direct drive from the input shaft 2 to the output shaft 1. After reviewing the Reynoldson `322 citation, the Applicant respectfully submits that this reference merely relates to a transmission having a number of shafts, gears and shift elements. It is respectfully submitted that there is no teaching, suggestion and/or disclosure of an area group which is located downstream of the transmission, as presently claimed. Consequently, the applied reference also fails to in any way teach, suggest or disclose an area group having an input shaft and an output shaft which can be directly coupled to one another or can be indirectly couple with one another by the internal gears of the area group, e.g., a planetary gear set, as presently claimed.

The Applicant notes in the originally filed specification paragraphs 026-028, both FIGS. 1 and 2 illustrate "a transmission" with a related input shaft 1, output shaft 2 and counter shaft 3. FIG. 3, on the other hand, shows the area group arranged downstream of the transmission. The area group, like the transmission, also includes an input shaft 1' and an

output shaft 2'. The transmission of FIGS. 1 and 2 and the area group of FIG. 3 are mutually exclusive. As taught in the specification, power flows into the transmission via the transmission input shaft 1 and flows therethrough to the transmission output shaft 2, via any one of a number of power flow path arrangements. Thereafter, the power flows downstream, via the transmission output shaft 2, to the input shaft 1' of the area group and passes, either directly or indirectly therethrough to the output shaft 2' of the area group. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art of Reynoldson '322 fails to in any way teach, suggest or disclose the presently claimed invention.

In order to emphasize the above noted distinctions between the presently claimed invention and the applied art, the independent claims of this application both now recite the features of a transmission having

an area group being arranged downstream of the transmission, the area group having an area group input shaft (1') and an area group output shaft (2') and an area group direct gear for directly connecting the area group input shaft (1') to the area group output shaft (2'); wherein when the transmission direct gear couples the transmission input shaft (1) to the transmission output shaft (2) and when the area group direct gear directly connects the area group input shaft (1') to the area group output shaft (2'), only the transmission input shaft (1), the transmission output shaft (2), the area group input shaft (1') and the area group output shaft (2'), along with associated shift elements of the transmission direct gear and the area group direct gear, rotate so as to minimize friction losses within the transmission and the area group.

Such features are believed to clearly and patentably distinguish the presently claimed invention from all of the art of record, including the applied art.

If any further amendment to this application is believed necessary to advance prosecution and place this case in allowable form, the Examiner is courteously solicited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

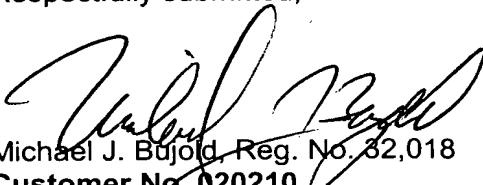
In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the raised rejection(s) should be withdrawn at this time. If the Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's view concerning the withdrawal of the outstanding rejection(s) or applicability of the Reynoldson '322 reference, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate the specific passage or passages, or the drawing or drawings, which contain the necessary teaching, suggestion and/or disclosure required by case law. As such teaching, suggestion and/or disclosure is not present in the applied references, the raised rejection should be withdrawn at this time. Alternatively, if the Examiner is relying on his/her expertise in this field, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to enter an affidavit substantiating the Examiner's position so that suitable contradictory evidence can be entered in this case by the Applicant.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the raised rejection(s) should be withdrawn and this application is now placed in a condition for allowance. Action to that end, in the form of an early Notice of Allowance, is courteously solicited by the Applicant at this time.

The Applicant respectfully requests that any outstanding objection(s) or requirement(s), as to the form of this application, be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated for this case.

In the event that there are any fee deficiencies or additional fees are payable, please charge the same or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account (Account No. 04-0213).

Respectfully submitted,

  
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